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AGRICULTURE

THE HEALTH OF OUR ANIMALS

No. 3 in a series
of pamphlets on
Alberta Government
Services.

Government of the
PROVINCE OF ALBERTA

THE HEALTH OF OUR ANIMALS

All farm animals are subject to disease. The farmer shares the responsibility of keeping his animals healthy with the Department of Agriculture.

The Alberta Government realizes that prevention is simpler and cheaper than curative measures and works actively to combat diseases of animals.

Fur Farms Branch

One of the most important services rendered by the Department of Agriculture to the fur farming industry is the operation of the distemper vaccine assistance plan. Under this plan, fur farmers who enrol may obtain distemper vaccine for the protection of their fur bearing animals. Although the plan has been in operation only since 1950, it has already saved the industry thousands of dollars.

Alberta's mink distemper vaccine assistance plan is the first of its kind in either Canada or the United States. Many enquiries about this policy are received.

The Department provides a Fur Farm Supervisor and its Veterin-

ary Services assist fur farmers with their problems. Financial assistance toward live animal and pelt shows as well as field days also is offered.

Poultry and Beekeeping

Through the Poultry Branch and the Provincial Apiarist, the needs of producers are met. Alberta's poultry industry is the second largest in Canada and the quality of its product is second to none. Alberta led the way in developing a rapid test of pullorum disease and has reduced the incidence of this disease to a fraction of one percent.

A staff of poultry fieldmen assists producers with their problems.

Veterinary Services

Alberta now has one of the best veterinary services in Canada. The new veterinary laboratory which opened in 1949 is one of the most up-to-date in Canada and is being employed at almost peak capacity to meet some of the veterinary problems of the Province.

The Veterinary Services Branch has assisted the Dominion Health of Animals Branch in creating 23

tuberculosis restricted areas in Alberta and an additional 52 municipalities are ready for testing.

Calfhood vaccination for the control of Bang's Disease has been undertaken by the Veterinary Services Branch. The number of calves vaccinated has increased from 7,000 a few years ago to over 75,000 in 1951. A policy to establish restricted areas for Bang's Disease also is in operation and seven municipalities have adopted this plan to date.

Brucellosis Control

Brucellosis losses have been reduced through the Federal-Provincial Brucellosis Control Program, a vaccination program aimed at building up a resistance against the disease. From April 1, 1951, to March 31, 1952, more than 94,000 calves were vaccinated under this program, adding an estimated \$1,000,000 to the value of these calves.

The vaccine is supplied by the Dominion Department of Agriculture and the Alberta Department of Agriculture supplies ear tags and certificates, keeps records of the vaccinations and actively promotes the program.

Vaccination must be done by a veterinarian and is recommended when the calves are between six and eight months old. Vaccination at this age allows the calves to be exported to the United States without a blood test up to 22 months after the vaccination.

Blood testing for brucellosis is carried out in the Alberta Government's Veterinary Laboratory, which tested more than 24,000 blood samples in 1951-52.

Brucellosis-restricted areas were established by your Government in 1949. In these areas, all heifer calves are vaccinated against brucellosis, reactors branded for identification and other regulations enforced to reduce the disease. Before such an area can be established, 66 2/3 percent of the cattle owners in a municipality must sign a petition favoring the establishment of the area.

The total number of specimens examined in the veterinary laboratory during 1951 amounted to 10,000. This service, plus 800 investigation trips and attendance at meetings, short courses, and conventions provides the livestock owners of Alberta with much valuable assistance.

